



MONTANA LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

Legislative Fiscal Division

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Legislative Fiscal Analyst
CLAYTON SCHENCK

October 24, 2005

Steve Meloy
46 N. Last Chance Gulch
Helena, MT 59620

Dear Mr. Meloy:

As part of its oversight responsibilities the Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) has been receiving and reviewing updates on activities of and progress by a number of state functions. As a part of this ongoing effort, the LFC is requesting an update on the published goals and objectives (attached) for the following function of your agency:

Montana Advisory Council for Indian Education

The committee would like an informal response that addresses how well you are meeting each of the stated goals and objectives. Be specific where you can. A standard form is attached for your convenience.

Please provide your response by November 18, 2005, which you may send via email to Diane McDuffie at dimcduffie@mt.gov. Your response will be forwarded to the members of the committee, and a discussion will be considered for inclusion at the next LFC meeting.

We appreciate your attention to this request. If you have any questions, please contact Taryn Purdy at tpurdy@mt.gov or at 5383.

Sincerely,

Clayton Schenck

Legislative Finance Committee Update on Goals and Objectives

Agency: Board of Education

Function: Montana Advisory Council for Indian Education

Agency Contact: Denise Juneau, Director of Indian Education

LFD Contact: Taryn Purdy-Kris Wilkinson

Respond By Date: ~~November 18, 2005~~ March 1, 2006

Email to: ~~Diane McDuffie~~, dimecduffie@mt.gov Kris Wilkinson, kwilkinson@mt.gov

Please discuss how well are you meeting each of the published goals and objectives (attached) for the listed function(s) for the current fiscal year. Be as specific in your response as possible. For example, what (if anything) are you measuring to determine accomplishments? Are you progressing towards goals? Have you suffered any setbacks or encountered any particular challenges? How can the legislature assist you?

RESPONSE: The Montana Advisory Council for Indian Education (MACIE) has, since 1972, provided advice about Indian Education to both the Office of Public Instruction (OPI) and the Board of Public Education (BPE) that has proven invaluable in many educational initiatives. The MACIE consists of designees from each Montana Tribal government as well as representatives from statewide educational organizations. Although the MACIE does not create policy for either the Superintendent of Public Instruction or the BPE, their advisory role does play a part in decision-making processes concerning Indian Education initiatives. Until this last legislative session, the MACIE operated without any funding source and, in many cases, relied heavily on each members respective organization to provide time and travel. With the new legislative funding for Indian Education for All – of which the OPI has set aside a portion to support the MACIE – a renewed energy is in place that will assist both the OPI and the BPE implement Indian Education for All and narrow the Indian Student Achievement gap. The current role of MACIE is one of reviewing OPI materials and resources aimed at implementing Indian Education for All, providing advice to OPI regarding its guidance to schools about the new Indian Education for All funding, providing advice in OPI's and BPE's communication efforts with tribes and educational organizations, and maintaining efforts to meet their stated goals. The goals of the MACIE are laudatory as they are broad and far-reaching. They remain, however, *goals*. The MACIE, with its new funding, is looking forward to meeting in the near future to refine their goals, tie measurable objectives to the goals, and note their many successes. This future meeting is important as it will establish its role in this new era of Indian Education.

MONTANA ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR INDIAN EDUCATION

GOALS

1. Communication

Facilitate communication about Indian education among all stakeholders in Montana.

Montana Advisory Council on Indian Education will develop strategies of communication to allow their respective constituents to provide input on their needs and issues and Montana Advisory Council on Indian Education members will be responsible for bringing these matters to Montana Advisory Council on Indian Education's attention for discussion and action.

RESPONSE: The MACIE has been refining its process for communicating with its representative governments and organizations, the Superintendent of the OPI, and the BPE. MACIE meetings are announced and publicly noticed both on the OPI and BPE website; at the same time agenda items are requested. MACIE members solicit input from their respective governments and organizations; and the OPI and the BPE also submit items. A report form has been developed to summarize the main agenda items, the outcome of the discussions, and recommendations to the Superintendent and the BPE. The form also notes the OPI's and BPE's response to each MACIE recommendation. This report is sent to each MACIE member and his or her representative government or organization as a vehicle for communicating with these stakeholders. These reports are also now being sent to all tribal councils – per MACIE recommendation. Minutes of each MACIE meeting is recorded and presented to the members for approval at the subsequent meeting.

2. Success in Schools

Identify and disseminate research-based measurable criteria, both behavioral and academic, that indicate successful education for Montana's Indian children.

RESPONSE:

The MACIE has consistently been a part of OPI's discussions regarding the Indian student achievement gap. They have provided feedback about the lack of progress on Adequately Yearly Progress (AYP) of schools with a high population of Indian students, assessment issues, suspension and expulsion data, youth risk behavior survey, drop out issues, etc.

The OPI has prepared, and is currently preparing, draft guidance for school districts regarding appropriate instructional programs and academic support for improving the academic achievement of Indian students in Montana. MACIE will review these draft guidance documents and provide advice to the OPI about their content.

3. Evaluation

Montana's pre-K-16 education system shall be evaluated on a continuing basis to determine its effectiveness in meeting the needs of Montana's Indian students and appropriate recommendations made to the Office of Public Instruction and Board of Public Education based on this evaluation process.

RESPONSE: See response to #4.

4. Data Analysis

Collect and analyze data to monitor accountability of educational agencies to address the needs of Indian education.

RESPONSE: Evaluation and Data Analysis work hand-in-hand. The MACIE periodically requests presentations/updates from the OPI and the BPE regarding relevant issues – such as the results of the statewide assessments, special education data, OPI's annual data collection, accreditation reviews, etc... This information provides a background and foundation for MACIE's advice regarding how to reduce the achievement gap for Indian students.

5. Leadership

Encourage and promote the active participation of Indian people, tribes and tribal organizations in the education process.

Encourage and promote Indian educational leadership in decision-making positions at all levels, including Indian Education for All, Certification Standards and Practices Advisory Council and other appropriate committees.

RESPONSE: The MACIE has consistently provided leadership in statewide Indian Education efforts. The members meet with the Montana Indian Education Association (MIEA) and, in fact, meet each year at the MIEA conference. This allows many Indian education advocates to meet with the MACIE members and discuss their educational concerns from all areas of Montana. It also allows the MACIE to provide input and feedback to Indian Educators on a statewide basis.

The OPI often relies on the MACIE members to provide advice concerning appointments to their many other boards and committees (that may or may not be MACIE members). When asked, the MACIE ensures that a voice is present on these boards and committees representing the Indian Education community.

6. Budget and Legislative Review and Monitoring

Prepare budgetary recommendations to be submitted to the Office of Public Instruction for programs that affect Montana Advisory Council on Indian Education's goals and purposes.

Montana Advisory Council on Indian Education members are charged with the responsibility to monitor and advocate legislation which potentially affects its constituency and keeps its constituents apprised of issues and concerns to make appropriate recommendations.

RESPONSE: The MACIE receives periodic updates from the Superintendent and her staff regarding pending legislation, which provides a forum for the MACIE members to make suggestions and recommendations concerning legislative activities. The MACIE, in turn, disseminates this information to their respective governments and organizations.

The MACIE has, in the past, asked the Superintendent to submit a budget request that would support MACIE efforts. This request was honored, but the legislature never appropriated any funds for these efforts. In the 2005 legislative session, the OPI designated a portion of its Indian Education for All funds to provide this necessary support to the MACIE so it could better meet its responsibilities and assist in OPI's efforts to carry out and implement Indian Education for All. The MACIE's role is more critical to OPI than ever before -- and its advisory role shall be called upon in many instances as the OPI develops resources and materials to implement Indian Education for All and to ensure that Indian students receive a quality education.